

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Children's Performance Indicator Project Advisory Group

FROM: John Pandiani
Brad James

DATE: August 21, 1997

RE: Disability Category of Special Education Students

This week's analysis focuses on the numbers and rates of children and adolescents served under 6 special education categories in Vermont.

We look forward to your comments on the quality of the data, the appropriateness of the analysis, and the effectiveness of the presentation of these data, as well as your interpretation of the results.

¹ Turnbull, et. al., Exceptional Lines: Special Education in Today's Schools. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ (1995).

Disability Category of Special Education Students

Question: Does the number of special education students in different disability categories vary among gender and age groups?

Data: The Vermont Department of Education provided a database of all the children and adolescents (21 and under) classified as special education students as of December 1, 1996. The database includes the disability category for each individual, their school, date of birth, and gender code.

Analysis: Vermont's fourteen disability categories were grouped into 6 categories for purposes of analysis. Percents for each disability category and age group are based on the total number of children and adolescents in each disability category. Rates per 1,000 children and adolescents are based on the total number of individuals in each age group statewide.

Results: Of the 12,322 children and adolescents served by special education in Vermont, 13% are on an individualized education plan (IEP) for emotional behavioral disorders. Nationally, 8.5% of all students with disabilities were classified as having emotional behavioral disorders in 1992.¹

The largest category of individuals are classified as having a specific learning disability (37%). Physically impaired individuals comprised 22% of the all special education students followed by developmentally delayed children and adolescents (17%), and children and adolescents with learning impairments (11%).

Seventy one percent of Vermont children and adolescents with disabilities are male. The difference by gender is greatest in emotional behavioral disorders (78% male) and specific learning disabilities (74% male) but is evident in every other category.

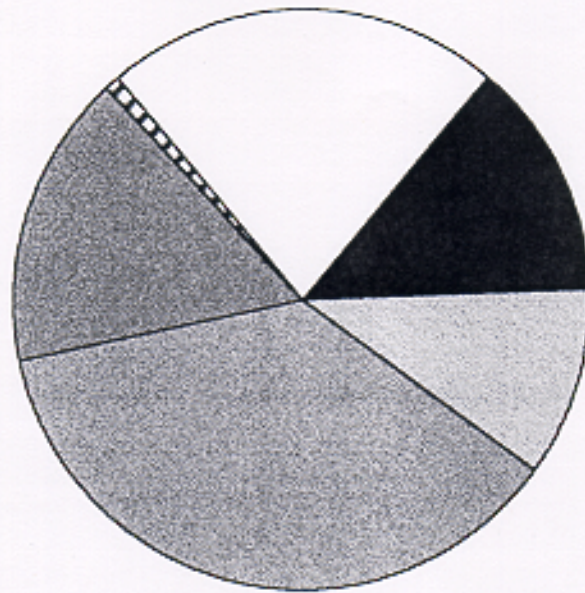
Among children and adolescents with emotional behavioral disorders, 11 to 13 year olds are the age group with the highest per capita rate (16 per 1,000) followed by 14 to 21 year olds (14 per 1,000), and 6 to 10 year olds (8 per 1,000).

Children and adolescents diagnosed as learning impaired show a similar pattern – 11 to 13 year olds have the highest rate (13 per 1,000) followed by 14 to 21 year olds and 6 to 10 year olds (9 per 1,000 each).

Next Questions: What is the overlap between special education, mental health, and SRS caseloads in Vermont? Do special education rates vary among geographic areas? Have these rates changed over time, and will they change in the future?

¹ Turnbull, et. al., *Exceptional Lines: Special Education in Today's Schools*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ (1995).

Number of Special Education Students by Disability Category



Disability Category	Percent of Total	Number of Individuals ¹
Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD)	13%	1,638
Learning Impaired (LI)	11%	1,315
Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	37%	4,508
Developmentally Delayed	17%	2,035
Physical Impairment	22%	2,730
Other Impairment	1%	96
Total		12,322

¹ The number of individuals in each special education disability category are based on data files obtained from the Vermont Department of Education and include children and adolescents on an individualized education plan as of December 1, 1996.

Disability Categories

Emotional Behavioral Disorder - marked by: inappropriate behavior or feelings; poor interpersonal relationships with peers or teachers; and/or other indications of inability to learn or a pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

Learning Impaired - performance at or below minus 1.5 standard deviations (or equivalent measure) in basic skills and aptitude with concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior.

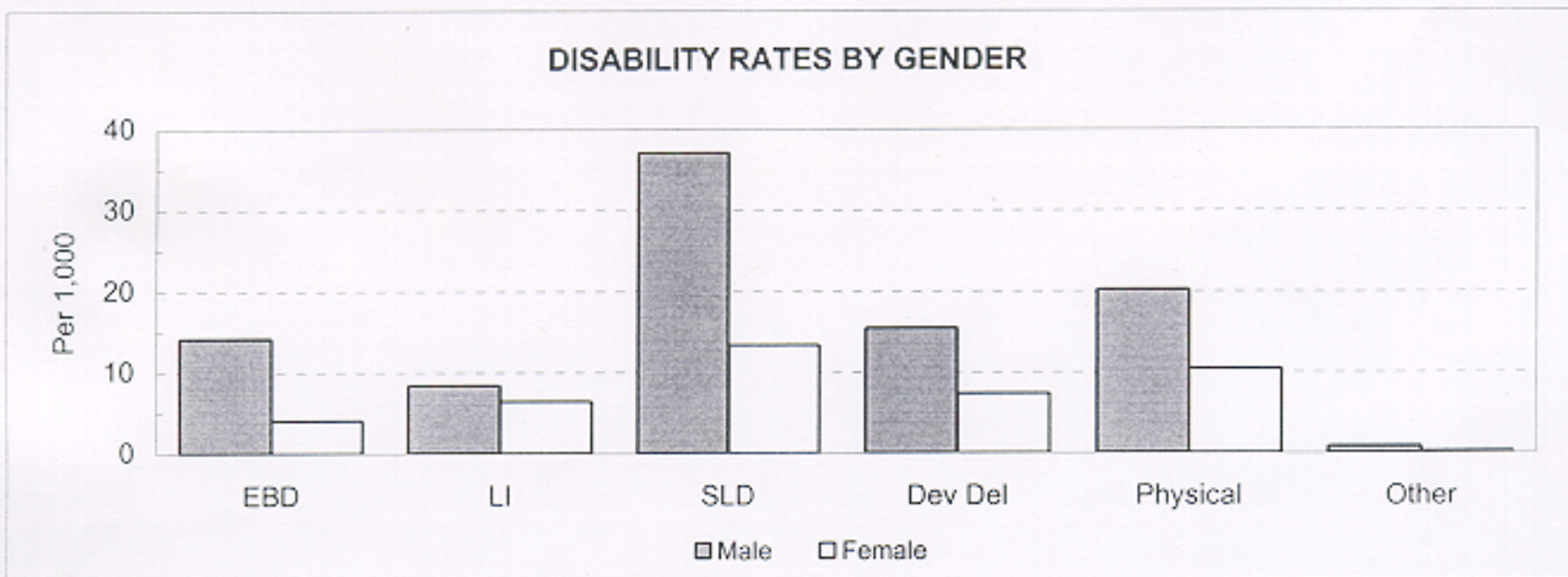
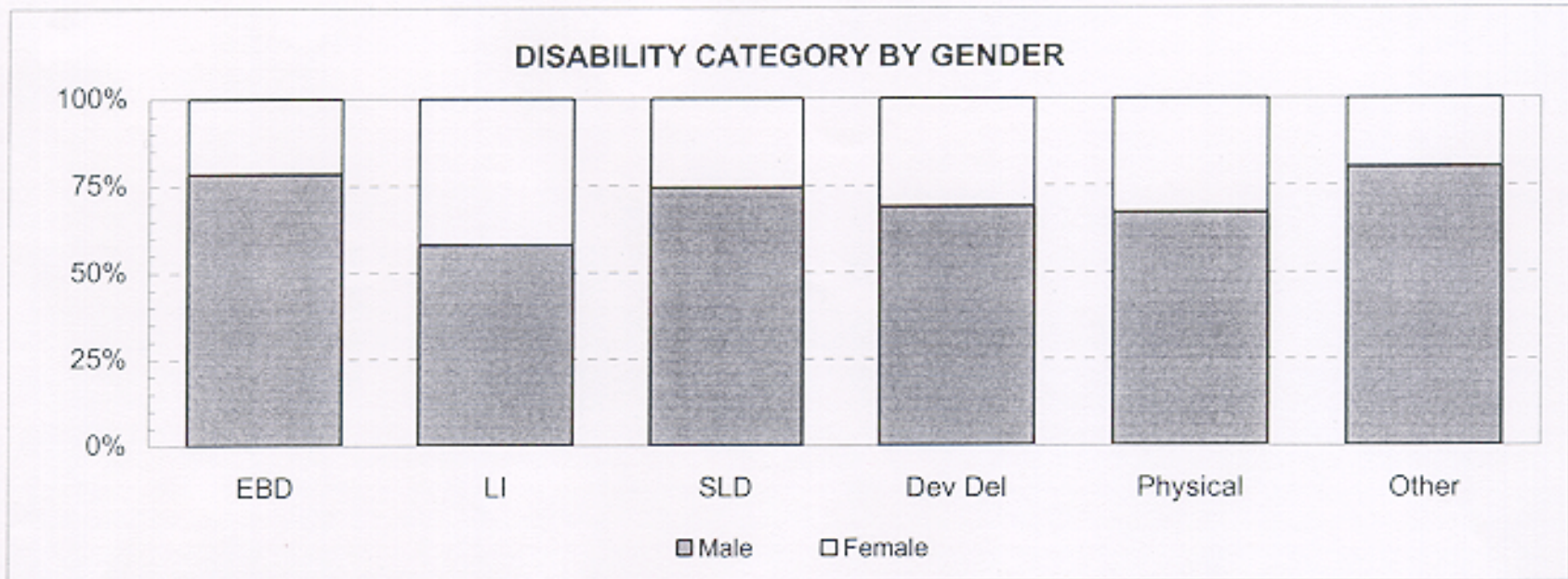
Specific Learning Disability - marked by a severe discrepancy between a student's ability and his or her achievement in one or more basic skill areas.

Developmental Delay - defined as a clearly observable and measurable delay in cognitive, physical, communication, social, emotional, and/or adaptive development.

Physically Impaired - consists of hard of hearing, deaf, speech language impaired, visually impaired, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, deaf-blind, or multihandicapped.

Other - consists of traumatic brain injury and autism.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DISABILITY RATES BY GENDER
DECEMBER 1, 1996



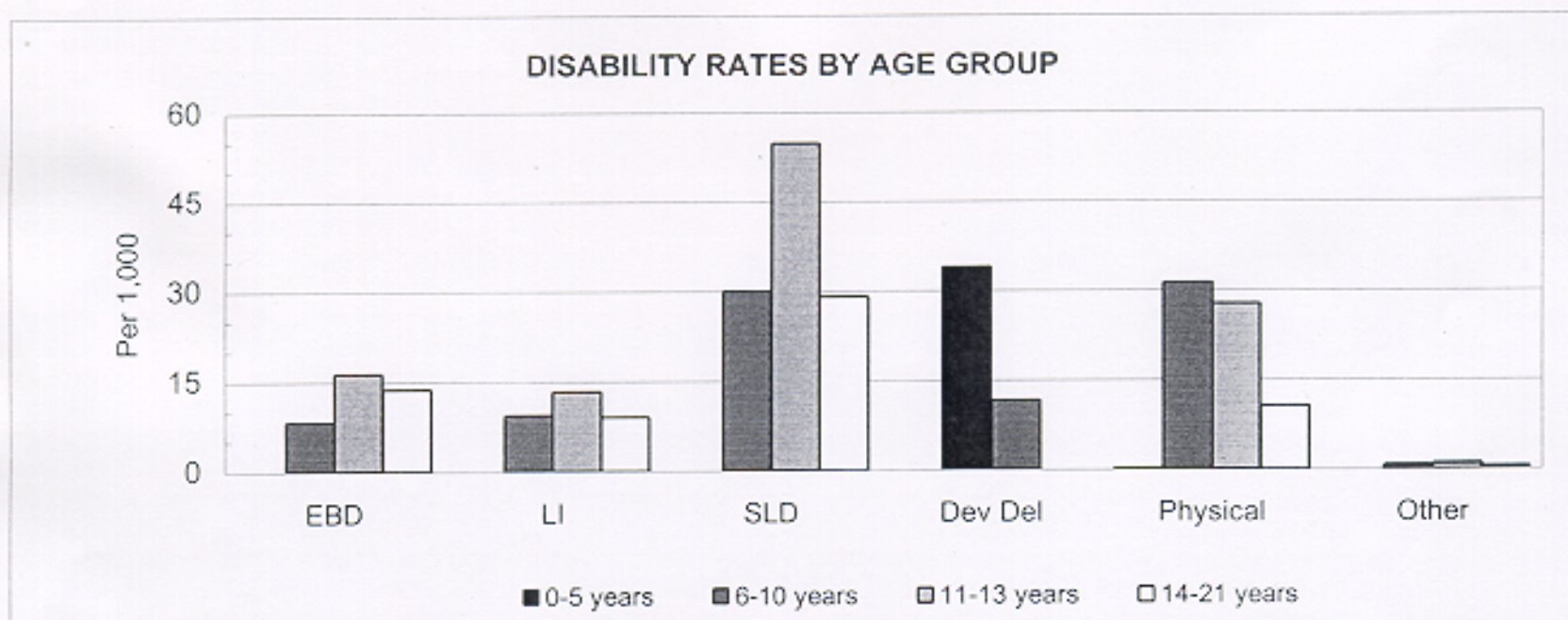
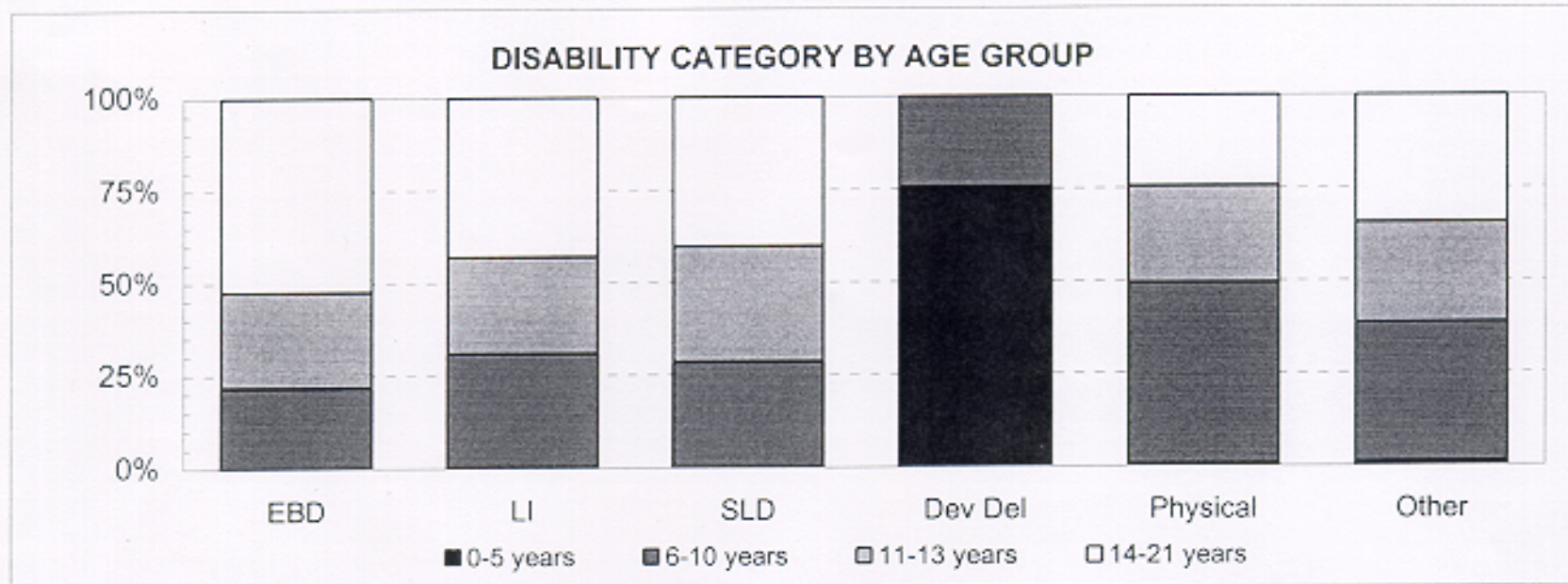
	Gender	Emotional Behavioral Disorder	Learning Impaired	Specific Learning Disability	Developmentally Delayed	Physical Impairment	Other Impairment	Total
Number ¹	Male	1,285	763	3,357	1,401	1,832	77	8,715
	Female	353	552	1,151	634	898	19	3,607
	Total	1,638	1,315	4,508	2,035	2,730	96	12,322
Percent ²	Male	78%	58%	74%	69%	67%	80%	71%
	Female	22%	42%	26%	31%	33%	20%	29%
Rate per 1,000	Male	14	8	37	15	20	1	96
	Female	4	6	13	7	10	<1	42
	Total	9	7	26	12	15	1	70

¹ The number of individuals in each special education disability category are based on data files obtained from the Vermont Department of Education and include children and adolescents on an individualized education plan as of December 1, 1996.

² Percents are based on the total number of children and adolescents in each disability category.

³ Populations figures used for age groups rates are based on data from the *Population and Housing Estimates, Vermont, 1995*, published by the Vermont Department of Health Agency of Human Services.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DISABILITY RATES BY AGE GROUP
DECEMBER 1, 1996



	Age Groups (years)	Emotional Behavioral Disorder	Learning Impaired	Specific Learning Disability	Developmentally Delayed	Physical Impairment	Other Impairment	Total
Number ¹	0-5	0	1	0	1,537	14	1	1,553
	6-10	356	403	1,278	498	1,333	36	3,904
	11-13	423	345	1,415	0	716	26	2,925
	14-21	859	566	1,815	0	667	33	3,940
	Total	1,638	1,315	4,508	2,035	2,730	96	12,322
Percent ²	0-5	---	0.1%	---	76%	0.5%	1%	13%
	6-10	22%	31%	28%	24%	49%	38%	32%
	11-13	26%	26%	31%	---	26%	27%	24%
	14-21	52%	43%	40%	---	24%	34%	32%
	Total	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Rate per 1,000	0-5	---	<1	---	34	<1	<1	34
	6-10	8	9	30	12	31	1	92
	11-13	16	13	55	---	28	1	114
	14-21	14	9	29	---	11	1	63
	Total	9	7	26	12	15	1	70

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